

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action of September 09, 2005, wherein:

- A. The drawings were objected to; and
- B. Claims 1-99 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Proctor, Jr. et al (US Pat No. 5,687,196).

DRAWINGS

Turning now to the Office Action, the Examiner objected to figures 1 and 2 in the drawings because the drawings do not show legends explaining the numbers shown in the drawings. The Examiner further stated that a proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office Action to avoid abandonment of the application and that the objection will not be held in abeyance.

The Applicant's representative spoke with the Examiner on November 11, 2005 to discuss the drawings and the Examiner's objection of figures 1 and 2. It was agreed upon by both the Examiner and the Applicant's representative that the specification adequately explains the numerals shown in the drawings and that the Examiner's objection to the drawings would be withdrawn without any need to submit corrected drawings.

CLAIM REJECTIONS - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-99 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Proctor, Jr. et al (US Pat No. 5,687,196), herein after referred to as "Proctor."

Claim 1

Regarding Claim 1, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches an agent (e.g. element 10) for receiving signals from at least one other locally spaced agent (e.g., element 12), the agent comprising: at least one signal receiver for receiving a strength signal having a signal strength from at least one other locally spaced agent (see col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19); at least one data receiver for receiving a data signal including data from at least one other locally spaced agent (see col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19); means for associating

each data signal with a strength signal, where the data signal and the strength signal associated are from the same other locally spaced agent (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19); and means for selecting a data signal based on its associated strength signal (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4).

The Examiner misinterprets the significance of Proctor. The invention disclosed in Proctor does not rely on signal strength at all and, in fact, teaches against such a feature (see Proctor, col. 2, lines 45-66). Instead, Proctor discloses a “tracking and locating system in which a base station 10 transmits a signal to a remote unit 12 which relays the signal back to the base station 10. ... By determining the round trip time and subtracting the known delay within the remote unit 12 and within the base station’s detection system, the propagation time is determined and the distance may be calculated” (see Proctor, col. 4, lines 5-14). As concisely stated in the Abstract, “the received ... signals, including the direct and multi-path signals, from a remote transmitter are correlated into plural path signals, and the direction and distance to the transmitter is determined from the earliest arriving path signal” (see Proctor, the Abstract). Basically, the invention disclosed in Proctor determines the direction of the transmitter by assessing from which direction it first received a signal. Further, the invention in Proctor determines the distance of the transmitter based on how long it takes to receive the signal from the transmitter. In other words, nowhere in Proctor does it discuss sending data and associating that data with a strength signal.

Proctor is to be contrasted with the invention of the present application, which discloses a method for signaling among a plurality of agents (see the Present Application, paragraphs 69 and 70). The signaling is designed to support communication between nearest neighbor transceivers (see id). Messages (data) are received by the agents, and the agents select only the “best” messages according to some criteria either for processing internally or for re-transmission to the local neighboring agents of the receiving agent, or a combination of the both (see id). In a simple case, the selection of a signal may be based on signal strength (see id). Assuming that all agents are transmitting with the same power level, the signal strength can serve as a measure of distance or as a measure of the opacity of the environment with respect to the particular type of signal (see id). A cumulative measure of the signal strength may be kept with the signal while it is passed among the agents (see id). At each agent, a

direction from which a signal was received may be maintained, and the strength of the locally received signal may be added to the cumulative measure (see id). In this manner, it is possible to gain a rough estimate for the overall opacity of a particular path (potentially the “best” path) through the agents or a rough estimate of the path length (see id).

Basically, the invention of the present application enables the selection of a signal from a plurality of signals received on the basis of local data such as the strength of the received signal (see the Present Application, the Abstract). The local data may be incorporated into a cumulative data portion of a signal that is passed from local agent to local agent across a plurality of agents in order to provide a gradient across the plurality of agents (see id). The gradient could be used, for example, to determine a shortest path across the agents (see id). The signaling techniques described in the present application can also be used to determine the distance and direction to objects in the signaling path (see id).

As described above, nowhere in Proctor can be found an agent comprising: at least one signal receiver for receiving a strength signal having a signal strength from at least one other locally spaced agent; at least one data receiver for receiving a data signal including data from at least one other locally spaced agent; means for associating each data signal with a strength signal, where the data signal and the strength signal associated are from the same other locally spaced agent; and means for selecting a data signal based on its associated strength signal. Because Proctor does not teach each of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that claim 1 is in allowable condition. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this rejection of claim 1.

Claim 2

Regarding claim 2, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 1, wherein the signal receiver and the data receiver are each directional receivers and wherein the means for selecting selects a data signal based on its associated strength and an associated signal direction (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

As stated above, the Examiner misinterprets Proctor. Nowhere in Proctor does it disclose selecting a data signal based on its associated strength and associated signal direction. Instead, Proctor selects the first arriving signal (i.e., time-based and not strength-based) as the “signal which has traveled the shortest distance and is most likely the signal corresponding to the direct path to the transmitter by selecting this signal from which to determine the range to and angle of arrival from the remote transmitter.” (see Proctor, Col 3, ln. 66-col. 4, ln. 4). Thus, Proctor does not teach all of the limitations of claim 2.

Additionally, the Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 3

Regarding Claim 3, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in Claim 2, wherein the directional receivers determine direction by receiving digital signals in angular regions (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 4

Regarding Claim 4, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 3, wherein the angular regions may be selectively combined to allow for different angular accuracy in the determination of the direction from which a digital signal was received (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this

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claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 5

Regarding Claim 5, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the agent further comprises a means for approximating a distance from which the strength signal has traveled based on the signal strength of the strength signal (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

As described above, Proctor does not teach using signal strength as a means for approximating distance. Instead, Proctor teaches using time delays and the amount of time it took to receive a signal to approximate distance. Thus, Proctor does not all of the claimed limitations of claim 5.

Additionally, the Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 6

Regarding Claim 6, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the signal receiver and the data receiver are incorporated as a single receiver (see col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 7

Regarding Claim 7, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in Claim 6, wherein the strength signal and the data signal are

combined into a message signal including a signal strength and data (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

As described above, Proctor does not teach combining a strength signal with a data signal as a message signal. Thus, Proctor does not all of the claimed limitations of claim 7.

Additionally, the Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 8

Regarding claim 8, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 7, wherein the agent is configured for receiving the message signal in the form of a digital data packet having a data portion with at least one element (see col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 9

Regarding claim 9, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 8, further comprising: a digital processor connected with the receiver for receiving the digital data packet (see col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19); an analog to digital converter connected with the receiver and with the digital processor for digitizing the signal strength and for providing the digitized signal strength to the digital processor (see col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19); and a memory connected with the processor for storing digital data packets (see col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 10

Regarding claim 10, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 9, wherein the agent further comprises a means for time stamping received digital data packets and for storing the time stamped received digital data packets in memory along with the digital data packets (see col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 11

Regarding claim 11, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 10, wherein the means for selecting the data signal selects a message based on at least one element selected from the group consisting of the digital data packet, the signal strength, and the time stamp (see col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 12

Regarding claim 12, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 9, wherein the means for selecting the data signal selects a message signal based on its digital data packet and signal strength (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

As described above, nowhere in Proctor does it disclose selecting a message signal based on its digital data packet and signal strength. Thus, Proctor does not teach all of the limitations of claim 12.

Additionally, the Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 13

Regarding claim 13, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 10, further comprising a means for checking the validity of received digital data packets, and wherein digital data packets found invalid are removed from the memory (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

Nowhere in Proctor can be found any reference to a means for checking the validity of received digital data packets, and wherein digital data packets found invalid are removed from the memory. Thus, Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations of claim 13.

Additionally, the Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 14

Regarding claim 14, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 13, wherein the signal receiver and the data receiver are each directional receivers and wherein the means for selecting selects a data signal based on its associated signal strength and an associated signal direction (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

As described above, nowhere in Proctor does it disclose selecting a data signal based on its associated signal strength and an associated signal direction. Thus, Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations of claim 14.

Additionally, the Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 15

Regarding claim 15, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 14, wherein the directional receivers determine direction by receiving digital signals in angular regions (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 16

Regarding claim 16, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 15, wherein the angular regions are represented as bins in the memory, wherein the bins may be selectively combined to allow for different angular accuracy in the determination of the direction from which a digital signal was received (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 17

Regarding claim 17, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 13, wherein the agent is configured for receiving the message signals of different types, and wherein the means for selecting is operated independently for signals of each type (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 18

Regarding claim 18, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 13, wherein the agent is configured to receive message signal including digital data packets each including at least one cumulative data portion, and wherein the agent further comprises a means for modifying the cumulative data portion (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 19

Regarding claim 19, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 18, wherein the agent further comprises a means for generating local data, and wherein the means for modifying the cumulative data portion of the digital data packets uses the local data for modifying the cumulative data portion (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

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Nowhere in the citation can be found any reference to “generating local data, and wherein the means for modifying the cumulative data portion of the digital data packets uses the local data for modifying the cumulative data portion.” Thus, Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations of claim 19.

Additionally, the Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 20

Regarding claim 20, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 18, wherein the means for selecting the data signal selects a message based on at least one element selected from the group consisting of the digital data packet, the signal strength, the time stamp, and the cumulative data portion of the digital packets (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 21

Regarding claim 21, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 20, wherein the agent is configured for receiving the message signals of different types, and wherein the means for selecting is operated independently for signals of each type (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this

claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 22

Regarding claim 22, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 20, wherein the cumulative data portion includes a cumulative strength measure, and wherein means for modifying the cumulative data portion of the digital packets uses the signal strength from the strength signal to modify the cumulative strength measure (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

As discussed above, Proctor does not utilize signal strength as applied to the present invention. Further, nowhere in Proctor can be found a reference to a means for modifying a cumulative data portion of digital packets using signal strength from the strength signal to modify a cumulative strength measure. Thus, Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations of claim 22.

Additionally, the Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 23

Regarding claim 23, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 22, wherein the signal receiver and the data receiver are each directional receivers and wherein the means for selecting selects a data signal based on its associated strength and an associated signal direction (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

As described above, nowhere in Proctor does it disclose selecting a data signal based on its associated signal strength and an associated signal direction. Thus, Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations of claim 23.

Additionally, the Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 24

Regarding claim 24, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 23, wherein the directional receivers determine direction by receiving digital signals in angular regions (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 25

Regarding claim 25, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 24, wherein the angular regions are represented as bins in the memory, wherein the bins may be selectively combined to allow for different angular accuracy in the determination of the direction from which a digital signal was received (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 26

Regarding claim 26, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 25, further comprising a transmitter connected with

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the processor for transmitting a digital signal including a digital packet to at least one other locally spaced agent (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 27

Regarding claim 27, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 26, further comprising a means for detecting when the same signal just transmitted by the transmitter is received back in the receiver in order to detect reflection from objects near the agent and a means for determining the signal strength of the signal and for using the signal strength to approximate the distance of an object from the agent (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

As described above, Proctor does not disclose a means for using the signal strength to approximate the distance of an object from the agent. Thus, Proctor does not disclose all of the claimed limitations of claim 27.

Additionally, the Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 28

Regarding claim 28, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 26, wherein the receivers are selected from the group consisting of optical receivers, acoustic receivers, and radio frequency receivers (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

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The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 29

Regarding claim 29, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 29, wherein the receivers are infrared receivers (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

Nowhere in the citation can be found any reference to an infrared receiver. Thus, Proctor does not disclose the claimed limitations of claim 29.

Additionally, the Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 30

Regarding claim 30, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 26, wherein the transmitters are directional transmitters (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 31

Regarding claim 31, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 30, wherein the directional transmitters transmit by

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sending signals in angular regions (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 32

Regarding claim 32, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 31, wherein the angular regions into which the transmitters transmit are represented as bins in the memory, wherein the bins may be selectively combined to allow for different angular breadth for the signal transmission (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 33

Regarding claim 33, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 26, wherein the transmitters are selected from the group consisting of optical receivers, acoustic receivers, and radio frequency receivers (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 34

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Regarding claim 34, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 34, wherein the transmitters are infrared transmitters (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

Nowhere in the citation can be found any reference to an infrared transmitter. Thus, Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations of claim 34.

Additionally, the Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 35

Regarding claim 35, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 26, wherein the transmitter is configured to transmit a signal including a data packet including the modified cumulative data portion of the selected signal (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 36

Regarding claim 36, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 26, wherein the transmitted signals have transmission strengths, and wherein the transmitter may be configured to vary the transmission strength (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this

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claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 37

Regarding claim 37, the Examiner referred to figures 1 through 4, stating that Proctor teaches the agent as set forth in claim 36, wherein the data packet transmitted further includes a data packet including information regarding the transmission strength of the transmitted signals whereby the means for selecting an agent receiving the signal can account for the altered signal strength of the signal when selecting among signals (see col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19).

The Applicant refers the Examiner to the comments above regarding claim 1. As Proctor does not teach all of the claimed limitations in claim 1, the Applicant believes that this claim, which depends therefrom, is also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 38 and 99

As to claims 38-99, the Examiner stated that they were rejected for the same reasons set forth in rejecting claims 1-37 corresponding to col. 3, ln. 39-col. 4, ln. 4; and col. 4, ln. 57-col. 5, ln. 19.

Claims 38 through 74 relate to a method for communicating among a plurality of agents. The claims include similar limitations as set forth in claims 1-37. As described above, because Proctor does not teach each of the claimed limitations in claims 1-37, the Applicant believes that these claims, which include similar limitations, are also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this rejection of claims 38-74.

Finally, claims 75 through 99 relate to a computer program product for use in facilitating communication among a plurality of agents. The claims include similar limitations as set forth in claims 1-37. As described above, because Proctor does not teach each of the claimed limitations in claims 1-37, the Applicant believes that these claims, which include

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similar limitations, are also allowable. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this rejection of claims 75-99.

5 **Concluding Remarks:**

The Applicant respectfully submits that in light of the above comments and remarks, the claims are now in allowable condition. The Applicant thus respectfully requests timely allowance of the pending claims.

- 10 In the event the Examiner wishes to discuss any aspect of this response, or believes that a conversation with either Applicants or Applicants' representative would be beneficial the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.
- 15 The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required or credit overpayment to deposit account no. 50-2691. In particular, if this response is not timely filed, the Commissioner is authorized to treat this response as including a petition to extend the time period pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) requesting an extension of time of the number of months necessary to make this response timely filed. The petition fee due 20 in connection therewith may be charged to deposit account no. 50-2691.

Respectfully submitted,



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